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Neurochemical Disruption, and Glial Activation  
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# **Early Postnatal Exposure to Ultrafine Particulate Matter Air Pollution: Persistent Ventriculomegaly, Neurochemical Disruption, and Glial Activation Preferentially in Male Mice**

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**Running Title:** Air Pollution, Ventriculomegaly, and Neurochemical Disruption

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## **Abstract**

**Background:** Air pollution has been associated with adverse neurological and behavioral health effects in children and adults. Recent studies link air pollutant exposure to adverse neurodevelopmental outcomes, including increased risk for autism, cognitive decline, ischemic stroke, schizophrenia, and depression.

**Objectives:** This study sought to investigate the mechanism(s) by which exposure to concentrated ambient ultrafine particles (CAPS) adversely influence central nervous system (CNS) development.

**Methods:** C57Bl6/J mice were exposed to ultrafine (<100 nm) CAPS using the Harvard University Concentrated Ambient Particle System or filtered air postnatal days (PND) 4-7 and 10-13 after which animals were euthanized either 24 hours or 40 days following cessation of exposure, and in another group of males at 270 days (ventricle area). Lateral ventricle area, glial activation, CNS cytokines, and monoamine and amino acid neurotransmitters were quantified.

**Results:** CAPS induced ventriculomegaly (i.e., lateral ventricle dilation) preferentially in male mice that persisted through young adulthood. Additionally, CAPS-exposed males generally showed decreases in developmentally important CNS cytokines, whereas, in females, CAPS induced a neuroinflammatory response as indicated by increases in CNS cytokines. CAPS also induced changes in CNS neurotransmitters and glial activation across multiple brain regions in a sex-dependent manner and increases hippocampal glutamate in males.

**Conclusions:** CAPS induces brain region- and sex-dependent alterations in cytokines and neurotransmitters in both males and females. Lateral ventricle dilation (i.e., ventriculomegaly) is only observed in CAPS-exposed male mice. Ventriculomegaly is a neuropathology that has been associated with poor neurodevelopmental outcome, autism, and schizophrenia. Our findings

suggest alteration of developmentally important neurochemicals and lateral ventricle dilation may be mechanistically related to observations linking ambient air pollutant exposure and adverse neurological/neurodevelopmental outcome in humans.

## Introduction

Air pollution has been associated with adverse neurological and behavioral health effects in children and adults. Recent epidemiological studies report associations between exposure to air pollutants and increased risk for autism (Becerra et al. 2013; Volk et al. 2011; Volk et al. 2013), cognitive decline (Power et al. 2011; Weuve et al. 2012), ischemic stroke (Lisabeth et al. 2008; Wellenius et al. 2012), schizophrenia (Pedersen et al. 2004), and depression (Lim et al. 2012). Exposures, in particular to ultrafine ambient particulate matter (UFP; <100 nm diameter), identified as potentially the most toxic constituent of air pollution (Oberdorster 2000), are pervasive and ubiquitous. Increases in neuroinflammation, oxidative stress, and glial activation have been identified as putative mechanisms by which air pollution exposures may impair the central nervous system (CNS) in adults (Block and Calderon-Garciduenas 2009), but such exposures in the context of early brain development, a time frame considered crucial to causation of autism, schizophrenia, and cognitive development remain largely unexplored. Given the potential public health importance of the reported epidemiological associations, it is imperative that the biological plausibility of such early developmental exposures to produce CNS dysfunction and disease be examined. Thus, we hypothesized that exposure of mice to UFP during early postnatal development, a period of rapid brain growth and differentiation, should adversely influence CNS development by mechanisms identified as subserving air pollutant effects.

## Methods

### *Animals, reagents, and exposures*

Eight week old male and female C57Bl6/J mice were purchased from Jackson Laboratories (Bar Harbor, ME) and allowed to acclimate in the housing room for 1 week prior to breeding.

Monogamous pairs of mice were bred for 3 days, males were removed and dams remained singly housed with litters until weaning. Weanling mouse pups were exposed to concentrated ambient ultrafine particles (CAPS; <100 nm) using the Harvard University Concentrated Ambient Particle (HUCAPS) described in full elsewhere (Allen et al. 2013). Briefly, animals were exposed to ambient ultrafine particulates in real-time from PND 4-7 and 10-13 for 4 hours per day for 4 days per week between hours 0700 – 1200, times corresponding to peak vehicular traffic outside the intake valve of the instrumentation. Particulates were concentration approximately 10 fold over ambient outdoor air. The HUCAPS system is fitted with a size-selective inlet and a high-volume (5,000 L/min) UFP concentrator that concentrates ambient particles. CAPS and filtered-air treated animals receive identical experimental manipulation. Due to presence of particle impactor in the HUCAPS system, animals in CAPS exposed chamber may be held at slightly higher negative pressure compared to filtered air; however, flow of CAPS-enriched or filtered air is maintained constant in both chambers. Room air is filtered by HEPA filtration (99.99% effective) for filtered air exposed animals. Humidity and temperature in exposure chambers was maintained at 35-40% and 77-79°F. Particulate mass concentration and counts are reported in Figure 1. Particle counts were obtained using a condensation particle counter (model 3022A; TSI, Shoreview, MN) and mass concentration was calculated using idealized particle density (1.5 g/cm<sup>3</sup>). Animals were euthanized by rapid decapitation due to known effect of anesthetics on neurochemistry on PND14 and PND55 to assess immediate and

persistent effects of CAPS on the developing and young adult CNS; an additional group of male brains from a separate exposure study obtained at PND270 was examined for ventricle area. Exposure characteristics for the PND270 exposure group were similar to those for PND14 and PND55 groups. Details are reported in other work (Allen et al. 2014a). To preclude litter specific effects, only a single pup per time point per sex per litter was used in the study. All mice used in this study were treated humanely and with regard for alleviation of suffering and approved by the University of Rochester IACUC.

### ***GFAP and IBA-1 immunostaining and image analysis***

Brains were extracted and placed into 4% paraformaldehyde for 24 hours and then placed in 30% sucrose until they sank. Brains were sectioned on a freezing microtome (Microm) at 40  $\mu$ m thickness in cryoprotectant (30% sucrose, 30% ethylene glycol in 0.1M phosphate buffer) and stored at -20°C until immunostaining. Every sixth section was stained for glial fibrillary acid protein (GFAP) and ionized calcium-binding adapter molecule 1 (IBA-1) to assess global activation of astrocytes and microglia, respectively. Briefly, brain sections were washed of cryoprotectant and placed into primary antibody for GFAP (Millepore, Billerica, MA; AB5804; 1:4000 dilution) or IBA-1 (Wako Chemicals USA, Richmond, VA 016-20001, 1:5000) for 24 hours. For GFAP, tissue was then placed into biotinylated secondary antibody (Vector Labs, Burlingame, CA; BA1000; 1:200 dilution) for 1 hour and the stain was visualized using 3,3'-diaminobenzidine (DAB). For IBA-1, tissue was placed into fluorescently-label secondary (Life Technologies, Grand Island, NY, A-11012; 1:400 dilution). Immunolabeled tissue was mounted onto Superfrost Plus micro slides (VWR, Radnor, PA, 48311-703) and coverslipped using

Cytoseal 60 (for chromogenic tissue; Fisher Scientific; Pittsburg, PA; 23-244257) or ProLong Gold Antifade Reagent (Life Technologies, Grand Island, NY, P36930).

Three images of each of following brain regions were obtained: corpus callosum, cortex, ventral midbrain, dentate gyrus, hippocampus (CA1/CA2), and striatum. Relative immunoreactivity was determined using Image Pro Plus 7.0 (MediaCybernetics, Rockville, MD). All images underwent contrast enhancement prior to utilization of the count/size method. Briefly, immunoreactive cells on 2-3 sections per brain region were enumerated using count/size feature of Image Pro Plus 7.0 across 3 equally sized fields per brain region modified from Cao et al. (2012). Data is reported as percent of time point- and sex-matched control.

#### ***Lateral ventricle and Aqueduct of Sylvius area determination***

The area of the lateral ventricles (Approximate Bregma range 1.10 mm-0.38 mm) and Aqueduct of Sylvius (Approximate Bregma range: -3.88 - -4.84 mm) was determined by tracing the outline of the area of interest in at least 4 adjacent sections of slide-mounted brain using Neurolucida (MBF, Williston, VT). Software enumerated the area of interest area in  $\mu\text{m}^2$ . Lateral ventricle bregma for the PND14 brains are approximate given that, to the knowledge of the authors, no atlas at that point in early postnatal brain development exists. To examine persistence of CAPS-induced lateral ventricle dilation male mice, ventricle area was quantified in another group of identically but not concurrently exposed males from brain harvested at approximately PND270. Unlike the mice from which brains were obtained at PND14 and 55, mice from which PND270 tissue were harvested had undergone behavioral testing (reported in Allen et al 2014a).



### ***Neurotransmitters quantification***

Briefly, brains were extracted and dissected on an ice-cold plate into the following regions: olfactory bulb, hippocampus, midbrain, striatum, hypothalamus, cerebellum, and cortex. High performance liquid chromatography coupled with an electrochemical detector (for monoamines) or a fluorescent detector (for amino acids) was used to quantify dopamine (DA), 3,4-dihydroxyphenylacetic acid (DOPAC), homovanillic acid (HVA), norepinephrine (NE), serotonin (5-HT), 5-hydroxyindoleacetic acid (5-HIAA), glutamine (GLN), glutamate (GLU), and  $\gamma$ -aminobutyric acid (GABA), expressed as ng/mg protein. Dopamine turnover was calculated as [DOPAC]/[DA]. Method details are published elsewhere (Cory-Slechta et al. 2013; Cory-Slechta et al. 2004; Virgolini et al. 2008).

### ***Cytokines***

Interleukin 1-beta (IL-1 $\beta$ ), tumor necrosis factor-alpha (TNF $\alpha$ ), and interleukin-6 (IL-6) in the striatum, hippocampus, olfactory bulb, midbrain, cortex, and cerebellum were quantified using custom multi-plex plate-based chemiluminescent ELISA (Quansys Biosciences, Logan, UT). Briefly, tissue was quickly sonicated in 0.1M PBS, pH 7.4 containing 1% protease inhibitor cocktail (Sigma, St. Louis, MO; P8340). 25  $\mu$ L of brain homogenate was loaded per well and were run in duplicate according to manufacturer's instructions. The chemiluminescent signal was visualized using the Q-view Imager and analyzed using Q-View Software (Quansys Biosciences, Logan, UT). Cytokine levels were normalized to total protein content of the same region as determined by the bicinchoninic acid method.

### ***Statistical analyses***

Statistical analysis was carried out using JMP10 (Cary, NC). Lateral ventricle dilation is characterized by a statistical interaction of postnatal CAPS x sex (see results) and thus all statistical analyses were separated by sex and used two-way ANOVAs with age of sacrifice and treatment group as the independent factors. Fisher's LSD post hoc analysis was used in the event of age of sacrifice by treatment interaction. All analyses were performed as two-tailed tests and  $p < 0.05$  is considered statistically significant.

### **Results**

Mice were exposed from postnatal day (PND) 4-7 and 10 -13 for 4 hrs/day between hours 0700-1200, times corresponding to peak vehicular traffic and particle concentration levels near the intake valve. Mean CAPS count across the 8 days of postnatal exposure was approximately 200,000 particles/cm<sup>3</sup>, and the mean particle mass concentration was 96 µg/m<sup>3</sup> (Figure 1). Particles remained ultrafine (<100 nm diameter) for all exposure days (Figure 1 inset).

To address the potential of CAPS to elicit immediate CNS effects and to determine the persistence of such effects, mice were euthanized at two times following cessation of exposure: PND14 (24 hrs post-exposure) and PND55 (young adulthood). Notably, CAPS-exposed male (TX x Sex interaction:  $F(1,32)=10.0559$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ; main effect of CAPS treatment for males ( $F(1,16)=10.3298$ ,  $p=0.0054$ ), but not female ( $F(1,16)=0.2455$ ,  $p=0.6270$ ), mice had significantly enlarged lateral ventricles compared to air-exposed controls (Air: Figure 2a; CAPS: Figure 2b), an observation confirmed by determination of lateral ventricle area using NeuroLucida (MBF Bioscience, Williston, VT) that quantitated increases of 380% and 178% at PND14 and PND55, respectively (Figure 2c). On PND14 only, a single CAPS-treated female showed enlarged lateral

ventricle as indicated by increased variability in figure 2c for CAPS-females at that time point; however, this effect failed to reach statistical significance. Lateral ventricle size in mice (sex unspecified) have been reported to increase out to 90 days of age, with more rapid growth up to about 40 days of age (Mandell et al. 2010), although separate determinations by sex reveal that males show a decline in area between 1 and 3 mos of age (Mandell et al. 2010). Figure 2a shows representative images of lateral ventricles of PND14 male air- (Figure 2a) and CAPS-treated (Figure 2b) animals at similar bregma. CAPS did not affect aqueduct of Sylvius (Figure 2c). To further evaluate persistence, brains from identically exposed males obtained at PND270 were subjected to ventricular tracing and increased lateral ventricle size confirmed by a two-tailed t-test ( $p=0.04$ ; Figure 2e,f).

To assess CAPS-induced glial activation as a potential mechanism of neurotoxicity, sections were immunostained for GFAP and IBA-1, markers for astrocytes and microglia, respectively. CAPS altered astrocyte state in a sex- and regionally-dependent manner (Figure 3 panels A-C). Data is presented as percent time point- and sex-specific filtered air control values. In males, CAPS reduced GFAP immunostaining in the corpus callosum (main effect of CAPS:  $F(1,15)=4.5986$ ,  $p=0.048$ ), at both PND14 and PND55, while reductions in GFAP immunoreactivity in hippocampus occurred only at PND14 (time point x treatment interaction;  $F(1,15)=5.200$ ,  $p=0.0376$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) (Figure 3, panels A and C). In contrast, females showed increases in GFAP in hippocampus (CAPS by time point:  $F(1,16)=9.1589$ ,  $p=0.008$ ), corpus callosum (CAPS by time point:  $F(1,16)=5.8066$ ,  $p=0.0284$ ), and anterior commissure (CAPS by time point:  $F(1,16)=12.76$ ,  $p=0.018$ ) (Figure 3, panels B and C), that were restricted to PND14 relative to PND14 air-treated females (all  $p$  values  $<0.05$ ), but not at PND55, indicating a

transient astrocytic response to CAPS present on PND14 that resolved by PND55. Data was also normalized to sex-specific PND14 filtered air control to allow for examination of trajectory of GFAP changes across the study period (see Supplemental Material, Figure S1).

CAPS altered IBA-1 immunostaining in the anterior commissure and hippocampus only in males (Figure 3, panels D and E). Data is presented as percent time point- and sex-specific filtered air control. Despite the larger increase at PND14, statistical analyses indicated that CAPS increased IBA-1 immunostaining (approximately 25%) in the anterior commissure at both time points (main effect of CAPS:  $F(1,15)=5.75$ ,  $p=0.03$ ), indicating persistent microglial response in the white matter. In contrast, CAPS increased IBA-1 immunoreactivity in hippocampus only at PND55 (CAPS by time point:  $F(1,15)=4.8791$ ,  $p=0.043$ ) relative to air-treated controls ( $p<0.05$ ). Data was also normalized to sex-specific PND14 filtered air control to allow for examination of trajectory of IBA-1 changes across the study period (see Supplemental Material, Figure S2).

CAPS modified CNS neurotransmitter levels in a sex- and regionally-dependent manner. CAPS increased hippocampal glutamate ( $F(1,26)=5.5383$ ,  $p=0.0246$ ), midbrain DA TO ( $F(1,26)=6.6590$ ,  $p=0.0159$ ), and cortical DA TO ( $F(1,18)=8.4456$ ,  $p=0.0106$ ) in males at both time points (Table 1). CAPS increased cortical NE in males only at PND 55 (CAPS by time point:  $F(1,26)=5.13$ ,  $p=0.03$ ) (Table 2). No treatment-related differences in CNS neurotransmitters were observed in olfactory bulb, or hypothalamus nor in DA, DOPAC, HVA, 5-HT, or 5-HIAA in midbrain, striatum, cortex, or hippocampus (not shown).

In females, CAPS reduced hippocampal GABA ( $F(1,28)=4.22$ ,  $p=0.049$ ), but increased midbrain HVA ( $F(1,29)=4.92$ ,  $p=0.035$ ) and DA ( $F(1,29)=6.9$ ,  $p=0.013$ ) and hippocampal serotonin ( $F(1,29)=6.46$ ,  $p=0.017$ ) at both time points (Table 2). Additionally, cortical NE was increased

only at PND55 (CAPS by time point:  $F(1,29)=6.37$ ,  $p=0.017$ ), while hippocampal DA TO (CAPS by time point:  $F(1,26)=4.90$ ,  $p=0.036$ ) was increased, and midbrain DA TO reduced (CAPS by time point:  $F(1,29)=9.52$ ,  $p=0.004$ ) only at PND14. No treatment-related differences in neurotransmitters in the olfactory bulb, cerebellum, or hypothalamus were observed (not shown).

In males, reductions in hippocampal IL-6 ( $F(1,28)=4.69$ ,  $p=0.039$ ), and in striatal IL-1 $\beta$  ( $F(1,28)=6.48$ ,  $p=0.017$ ) and TNF $\alpha$  ( $F(1,28)=5.00$ ,  $p=0.033$ ) were observed at both time points, with a similar trend in hippocampal IL-1 $\beta$  ( $F(1,28)=3.59$ ,  $p=0.069$ ) (Table 1). Hippocampal glutamate in CAPS-exposed males was positively correlated with hippocampal IL-1 $\beta$  ( $r^2=0.233$ ,  $p=0.039$ ) and IL-6 ( $r^2=0.361$ ,  $p=0.01$ ). In males, midbrain IL-1 $\beta$  (CAPS by time point:  $F(1,28)=4.76$ ,  $p=0.038$ ) and TNF $\alpha$  (CAPS by time point:  $F(1,28)=5.448$ ,  $p=0.027$ ) were reduced at PND14, but increased at PND55 (all  $p$  values  $<0.05$ ) (Table 1). No treatment-related differences in central cytokines were observed in male olfactory bulb or cerebellum (not shown).

In females, CAPS reduced cortical IL-6 at PND55 (CAPS :  $F(1,18)=5.78$ ,  $p=0.027$ ) while increasing midbrain IL-6 (CAPS by time point:  $F(1,28)=5.92$ ,  $p=0.022$ ) at PND55 (Table 2). IL-6 in female cortex at PND14 was undetectable. Midbrain TNF $\alpha$  ( $F(1,28)=7.05$ ,  $p=0.013$ ) and IL-1 $\beta$  ( $F(1,28)=6.65$ ,  $p=0.016$ ) were increased at both time points (Table 2). In contrast, striatal IL-6 was increased at PND14, but not PND55 (CAPS by time point:  $F(1,28)=8.61$ ,  $p=0.007$ , all post hoc  $p$  values  $<0.05$ ) (Table 2). No treatment-related differences in cytokines were observed in olfactory bulb or cerebellum (not shown).

## Discussion

Mice were exposed to human-relevant levels of UFP. As indicated in Figure 1, the average particle count was approximately 200,000 particles/cm<sup>3</sup>. Ambient UFP counts near roadways in Los Angeles, California (Westerdahl et al. 2005) and Minneapolis, Minnesota (Kittelson 2004) have been reported as high as 200,000 and 400,000 particles/cm<sup>3</sup>, respectively, with peak episodic counts reaching 2,000,000 particles/cm<sup>3</sup> in Minneapolis (Kittelson 2004).

CAPS induced a persistent dilation of the lateral ventricles, but not the aqueduct of Sylvius, preferentially in males. Lateral ventricle dilation is a predictor of poor neurodevelopmental outcome (Laskin et al. 2005; Tatli et al. 2012). It has been associated with multiple developmental CNS disorders, including autism and schizophrenia (Barttfeld et al. 2011; Bigler 1987; Fannon et al. 2000; Movsas et al. 2013; Sanfilipo et al. 2000; Schulz et al. 1983; Wright et al. 2000), idiopathic mental retardation, periventricular leukomalacia (Volpe 2005; Volpe 2003; Volpe 2001), fragile X syndrome and attention deficit disorder and, in the absence of other CNS abnormalities, to developmental delays (Gilmore et al. 2001; Gilmore et al. 2008). Its consequences can include progressive hydrocephalus, gray matter migration abnormalities, loss of parenchymal brain tissue, agenesis of the corpus callosum (CC) and delayed or abnormal maturation of white matter, i.e. reduced myelin basic protein (MBP) expression, diminished total axon volume, trisomies and microcephaly (Bigler 1987; Gilmore et al. 1998; Gilmore et al. 2001; Gilmore et al. 2008; Griffiths et al. 2010; Kuban et al. 1999; Kyriakopoulou et al. 2013; Manfredi et al. 2010). Ventriculomegaly is associated with such deficits, persists after birth (Gilmore et al. 2001), and is more prevalent in males (Gilmore et al. 1998). Our observation of male-specificity of the lateral ventricle dilation is consistent with literature suggesting that males are more likely

to be diagnosed with a number of neurodevelopmental and neuropsychological disorders of childhood including autism, earlier on-set schizophrenia, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, conduct disorder, and learning disabilities (CDC 2007; Kirkbride et al. 2012; Erskine et al. 2014; Boyle et al. 2011). While the mechanism(s) underlying the male-specificity of this effect are as yet undefined, they likely reflect sex differences in neurodevelopment such as the sex differences in microglial colonization of the brain seen already by PND4, at which time males show a more activated morphology (Schwarz et al. 2012), a possibility consistent with the observation that changes in IBA-1 were found only in males. Additionally, a single CAPS-exposed female appeared to show enlarged lateral ventricles at PND14 but considered across groups, these effects were not statistically significant, further suggesting male-specificity of the lateral ventricle dilation. However, future studies should address whether females may be rendered susceptible at higher particle concentrations or longer durations of exposure. Obstruction of the Aqueduct of Sylvius is a common mechanism of lateral ventricle dilation (James 1992) but was not seen here. Whether an earlier transient obstruction occurred cannot be ruled out, however. Future studies of a similar nature, should include utilization of repeated measures design in rodents exposed to CAPS. Use of magnetic resonance images (MRI) to track the trajectory of central ventricular system changes in the same animal across time would assist in illuminating the mechanism(s) by which such changes are induced by CAPS and may inform the sex-dependency of this effect. Global patterns of glial changes in the brain indicate that females mount a transient astrocytic response, but no microglial response to CAPS exposure, while males show both microglial and astrocytic dysfunction that persist into early adulthood.

Our previous work indicates significant disruption of adulthood neurotransmission in response to CAPS in mice that at least persists to almost 1 year of age (Allen et al 2014a,b). To determine the etiological role of such disruption in CAPS-induced neuropathology, regional levels of DA and its metabolites DOPAC and HVA, NE, 5-HT and its metabolite 5-HIAA, as well as glutamate, glutamine, and GABA were examined. Notably, the sustained increase in hippocampal glutamate may indicate the contribution of an excitotoxic mechanism of CAPS that persists until early adulthood. Additionally, increased dopamine metabolism, as evidenced in our animals by increased DA TO, has been associated with oxidative stress (Cohen 1983; Graham 1978; Hastings 1995; Schulz et al. 2000). Interestingly, loss of GABAergic neurons in the hippocampus, which is consistent with decreased hippocampal GABA observed in females here, has been implicated in both schizophrenia and bipolar disorder (Benes et al. 1998). Moreover, disrupted CNS neurotransmission is associated with both autism (Cook 1990) and schizophrenia (Grace 2012).

Early cytokine changes were also sex- and brain-region dependent (Tables 1 and 2). In the female midbrain, IL-6 was increased only at PND55, whereas TNF $\alpha$  and IL-1 $\beta$  were persistently increased across both time points. IL-6 in the female striatum was increased at PND14 only. A protracted profile of changes, as observed for female midbrain IL-6 may indicate adverse effects on ontogeny of microglial development that later results in a neuroinflammatory profile, while increases restricted to PND14 only, such as observed for female striatal IL-6, likely indicate a transient neuroinflammatory response.

Decreases, as opposed to increases, in male hippocampal IL-6 and striatal IL-1 $\beta$ /TNF $\alpha$  and in female cortical IL-6 were unanticipated, but perhaps suggest that microglia, a major source of



brain cytokines are dysfunctional or lost. Such cytokines have multiple important roles in the developing nervous system (Deverman and Patterson 2009), such that any alteration in brain cytokines during the early postnatal period would have deleterious effects on the CNS. Indeed, IL-1 $\beta$ , TNF $\alpha$ , and IL-6 have been implicated as having roles in synaptic plasticity in the hippocampus (Balschun et al. 2004; Goshen and Yirmiya 2009; Schneider et al. 1998), and can activate astrocytes that modulate synaptic plasticity. Furthermore, IL-1 receptor antagonist polymorphism was implicated in ADHD etiopathogenesis (Segman et al. 2002) and disrupted attention was observed in our male CAPS-exposed mice (Allen et al. 2013). Furthermore, hippocampal glu in CAPS-exposed males was positively correlated with hippocampal IL-1 $\beta$ /IL-6, likely indicating a mechanistic link between excitotoxicity and neuroinflammatory response. IL-1 $\beta$  has previously been proposed as a bridge between neuroinflammation and excitotoxicity (Fogal and Hewett 2008). This correlation was absent in air-exposed control males and in females regardless of exposure group.

Collectively these data show a dramatic susceptibility of male mice to environmentally relevant levels of early postnatal air pollution exposure, with effects that persist into adulthood and cause permanent neuropathology characterized by ventricular enlargement, a pathology not seen in females. Lateral ventricle dilation (ventriculomegaly), is a strong predictor of poor neurodevelopmental outcome in children and a pathological hallmark observed in both autism and schizophrenia. Thus, the current findings provide biological plausibility for the reported associations in epidemiological studies of air pollution with autism (Becerra et al. 2013; Volk et al. 2011; Volk et al. 2013), schizophrenia (Pedersen et al. 2004), and ADHD (Siddique et al.

2011) Moreover, the heightened sensitivity of males to CAPS effects parallels the greater prevalence of these disorders in males.

Although CAPS-induced ventricular enlargement is not observed in females, CAPS-exposed females exhibit biochemical and neurochemical alterations that are nevertheless significant and represent protracted neurotoxicity in response to early postnatal CAPS exposure. Males and females show significantly altered neurochemical changes in multiple brain regions, including areas that comprise the mesocorticolimbic dopamine tracts, regions critical to cognition and attention. CAPS-exposed males have increased levels of major excitatory neurotransmitter glutamate in hippocampus, a sign of excitotoxicity in that region. CAPS-exposed females show a decrease in hippocampal GABA, the major inhibitory neurotransmitter of the CNS. GABA alterations in the hippocampus have been implicated in both schizophrenia and bipolar disorder (Benes and Berretta 2001). The functional/behavioral significance of these changes remains to be fully determined; however impairment in behaviors involving the hippocampus, such as learning and memory, would be predicted. These changes in neurotransmitters along the mesocorticolimbic pathway may underlie the increased preference for immediate reward observed in CAPS-exposed males that we previously reported (Allen et al. 2013). In interpreting these findings, inherent differences between murine and human brain development must also be considered. The early postnatal period in both humans and rodents is marked by substantial brain development; however, the exact nature of the development is different. As a rough estimate, rat brain development at PND7 has been equated to approximate brain development at birth in the human (Clancy et al. 2007), thus our exposure paradigm that occurred from PND 4-7 and 10-13 in mice, in terms of neurodevelopment, probably best approximates what would be the perinatal

period in the human encompassing the timeframe shortly before and after birth. Taken together, these data suggest that exposure to CAPS in the early postnatal period, at human- and environmentally-relevant levels, may represent a far greater public health concern than has previously been recognized as a risk factor contributing to intractable neurodevelopmental disorders such as autism and schizophrenia.

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**Table 1.** Neurochemical disruption and cytokine changes in hippocampus, cortex, midbrain, and striatum of CAPS exposed males.

<b>Exposure</b>	<b>DA TO</b>	<b>NE</b>	<b>IL-1<math>\beta</math></b>	<b>TNF<math>\alpha</math></b>	<b>IL-6</b>	<b>Glu</b>
<b>Hippocampus</b>						
<i>PND14</i>						
Air	NA	NA	3.36 $\pm$ 0.77	NA	0.58 $\pm$ 0.15	41.57 $\pm$ 1.46
CAPS	NA	NA	2.39 $\pm$ 0.52	NA	0.35 $\pm$ 0.09	52.47 $\pm$ 4.80
<i>PND55</i>						
Air	NA	NA	2.76 $\pm$ 0.16	NA	0.61 $\pm$ 0.05	52.27 $\pm$ 2.92
CAPS	NA	NA	2.09 $\pm$ 0.24	NA	0.45 $\pm$ 0.07	54.85 $\pm$ 3.03
<i>Overall Effects</i>	NA	NA	TX	NA	TX	TX
<b>Cortex</b>						
<i>PND14</i>						
Air	22.35 $\pm$ 7.11	3.29 $\pm$ 0.17	0.97 $\pm$ 0.13	NA	NA	NA
CAPS	47.47 $\pm$ 21.16	3.29 $\pm$ 0.09	0.74 $\pm$ 0.06	NA	NA	NA
<i>PND55</i>						
Air	3.43 $\pm$ 0.93	7.61 $\pm$ 0.31	2.71 $\pm$ 0.48	NA	NA	NA
CAPS	6.45 $\pm$ 1.57	8.82 $\pm$ 0.31*	1.70 $\pm$ 0.20	NA	NA	NA
<i>Overall Effects</i>	TP, TX, TP x TX	TP, TX, TP x TX	TP, TX	NA	NA	NA
<b>Midbrain</b>						
<i>PND14</i>						
Air	4.26 $\pm$ 0.28	NA	20.33 $\pm$ 4.50	3.47 $\pm$ 0.76	NA	NA
CAPS	5.75 $\pm$ 0.62	NA	10.23 $\pm$ 0.911*	1.80 $\pm$ 0.15*	NA	NA
<i>PND55</i>						
Air	1.01 $\pm$ 0.13	NA	19.99 $\pm$ 1.86	3.38 $\pm$ 0.29	NA	NA
CAPS	1.23 $\pm$ 0.20	NA	27.85 $\pm$ 6.710*	4.90 $\pm$ 1.12*	NA	NA
<i>Overall Effects</i>	TP, TX	NA	TP, TP x TX	TP, TX x TX	NA	NA
<b>Striatum</b>						
<i>PND14</i>						
Air	NA	NA	2.11 $\pm$ 0.37	0.93 $\pm$ 0.23	NA	NA
CAPS	NA	NA	1.57 $\pm$ 0.24	0.52 $\pm$ 0.11	NA	NA
<i>PND55</i>						
Air	NA	NA	1.39 $\pm$ 0.30	0.20 $\pm$ 0.04	NA	NA
CAPS	NA	NA	0.53 $\pm$ 0.11	0.10 $\pm$ 0.02	NA	NA
<i>Overall Effects</i>	NA	NA	TP, TX	TX	NA	NA

**Table 2.** Neurochemical disruption and cytokines changes in hippocampus, cortex, midbrain, and striatum of CAPS exposed females.

Exposure	DA TO	NE	DA	HVA	5-HT	IL-1 $\beta$	TNF $\alpha$	IL-6	GABA
<b>Hippocampus</b>									
<i>PND14</i>									
Air	72.26 $\pm$ 15.97	NA	NA	NA	8.65 $\pm$ 0.49	NA	NA	NA	3.68 $\pm$ 0.10
CAPS	99.94 $\pm$ 8.45*	NA	NA	NA	9.21 $\pm$ 0.53	NA	NA	NA	2.81 $\pm$ 0.35
<i>PND55</i>									
Air	18.32 $\pm$ 5.68	NA	NA	NA	22.46 $\pm$ 1.34	NA	NA	NA	4.87 $\pm$ 0.45
CAPS	13.64 $\pm$ 2.44	NA	NA	NA	28.30 $\pm$ 1.33*	NA	NA	NA	4.23 $\pm$ 0.32
<i>Overall Effects</i>	TP, TP x TX	NA	NA	NA	TP, TX, TP X TX	NA	NA	NA	TP, TX
<b>Cortex</b>									
<i>PND14</i>									
Air	NA	3.46 $\pm$ 0.24	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	n.d.	NA
CAPS	NA	3.54 $\pm$ 0.13	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	n.d.	NA
<i>PND55</i>									
Air	NA	8.27 $\pm$ 0.23	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.36 $\pm$ 0.08	NA
CAPS	NA	7.25 $\pm$ 0.201*	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.18 $\pm$ 0.028*	NA
<i>Overall Effects</i>	NA	TP, TX, TP x TX	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
<b>Midbrain</b>									
<i>PND14</i>									
Air	5.85 $\pm$ 0.69	NA	1.83 $\pm$ 0.17	5.40 $\pm$ 0.33	NA	11.50 $\pm$ 2.07	2.13 $\pm$ 0.32	1.55 $\pm$ 0.31	NA
CAPS	3.83 $\pm$ 0.40*	NA	2.81 $\pm$ 0.25	6.51 $\pm$ 0.39	NA	13.27 $\pm$ 1.89	2.39 $\pm$ 0.24	1.56 $\pm$ 0.23	NA
<i>PND55</i>									
Air	1.34 $\pm$ 0.11	NA	2.19 $\pm$ 0.18	2.30 $\pm$ 0.16	NA	14.95 $\pm$ 1.45	2.72 $\pm$ 0.24	2.34 $\pm$ 0.26	NA
CAPS	1.29 $\pm$ 0.08	NA	2.37 $\pm$ 0.21	2.28 $\pm$ 0.13	NA	27.72 $\pm$ 3.12	4.77 $\pm$ 0.49	4.84 $\pm$ 0.588*	NA
<i>Overall Effects</i>	TP, TX, TP x TX	NA	TX	TP, TX	NA	TX	TP, TX	TP, TX, TP x TX	NA
<b>Striatum</b>									
<i>PND14</i>									
Air	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.19 $\pm$ 0.02	0.40 $\pm$ 0.14	NA
CAPS	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.13 $\pm$ 0.019*	0.15 $\pm$ 0.034*	NA
<i>PND55</i>									
Air	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.11 $\pm$ 0.02	0.05 $\pm$ 0.01	NA
CAPS	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.12 $\pm$ 0.02	0.07 $\pm$ 0.01	NA
<i>Overall Effects</i>	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	TP, TX, TP x TX	TP, TX, TP x TX	NA

Dopamine turnover (DA TO), Norepinephrine (NE), Dopamine (DA), Homovanillic Acid (HVA), Serotonin (5-HT), Interleukin-1 $\beta$  (IL-1 $\beta$ ), Tumor Necrosis Factor  $\alpha$  (TNF $\alpha$ ), Interleukin-6 (IL-6), and  $\gamma$ -aminobutyric acid (GABA). Data reported as group mean  $\pm$  SE. Monamines (DA TO, NE, DA, HVA, and 5-HT) reported in ng/mg protein, amino acids (GABA) reported in  $\mu$ g/mg protein, Cytokines (IL-1 $\beta$ , TNF $\alpha$ , IL-6) reported in pg/mg protein). (n=8-12 animals/treatment/time point). \* indicates statistical difference ( $p < 0.05$ ) from time point-specific air control. TP and/or TX indicate statistical main effect of time point and/or treatment, respectively. TP x TX indicates statistical interaction.

## Figure legends

**Figure 1.** Mean particle counts (left axis) and particle mass concentration (right axis)  $\pm$  SD for each day of exposure. Mean diameter (inset)  $\pm$  SD for each day of exposure.

**Figure 2.** Images of male lateral ventricle in Air-exposed (A) and CAPS-exposed (B) male mice from at PND14 (scale bar is 10  $\mu$ m) or approximately PND270 (scale bar is 100 $\mu$ m) after exposure (D and E, respectively). Quantification of lateral ventricle on PND14, 55, and 270 (C/F) and Aqueduct of Sylvius area on PND14 and 55 is below (C). Data reported as group mean area  $\pm$  SE. (n=5 animals/sex/treatment/time point). TX indicates main effect of CAPS treatment\*indicates results of two-tailed t-test,  $p<0.05$ .

**Figure 3.** Representative Images of GFAP Immunoreactivity in males (A) and females (B) in the corpus callosum and hippocampus of Air- and CAPS-exposed mice at PND14 with relative quantification in those regions and the dentate gyrus, cortex, midbrain, striatum, and anterior commissure immediately adjacent (C). Images of IBA-1 immunoreactivity in anterior commissure at PND14 and hippocampus of male mice at PND55 (D) with relative quantification immediately below (E). Data reported as percent sex-specific control by time point  $\pm$  SE. (n=5 animals/sex/treatment /time point). Bar=50  $\mu$ m. TX indicates main effect of CAPS treatment and TP x TX indicates statistical interaction between CAPS treatment and time point. \* indicates statistically different ( $p<0.05$ , two-tailed) from time point- and sex-specific control.

Figure 1.

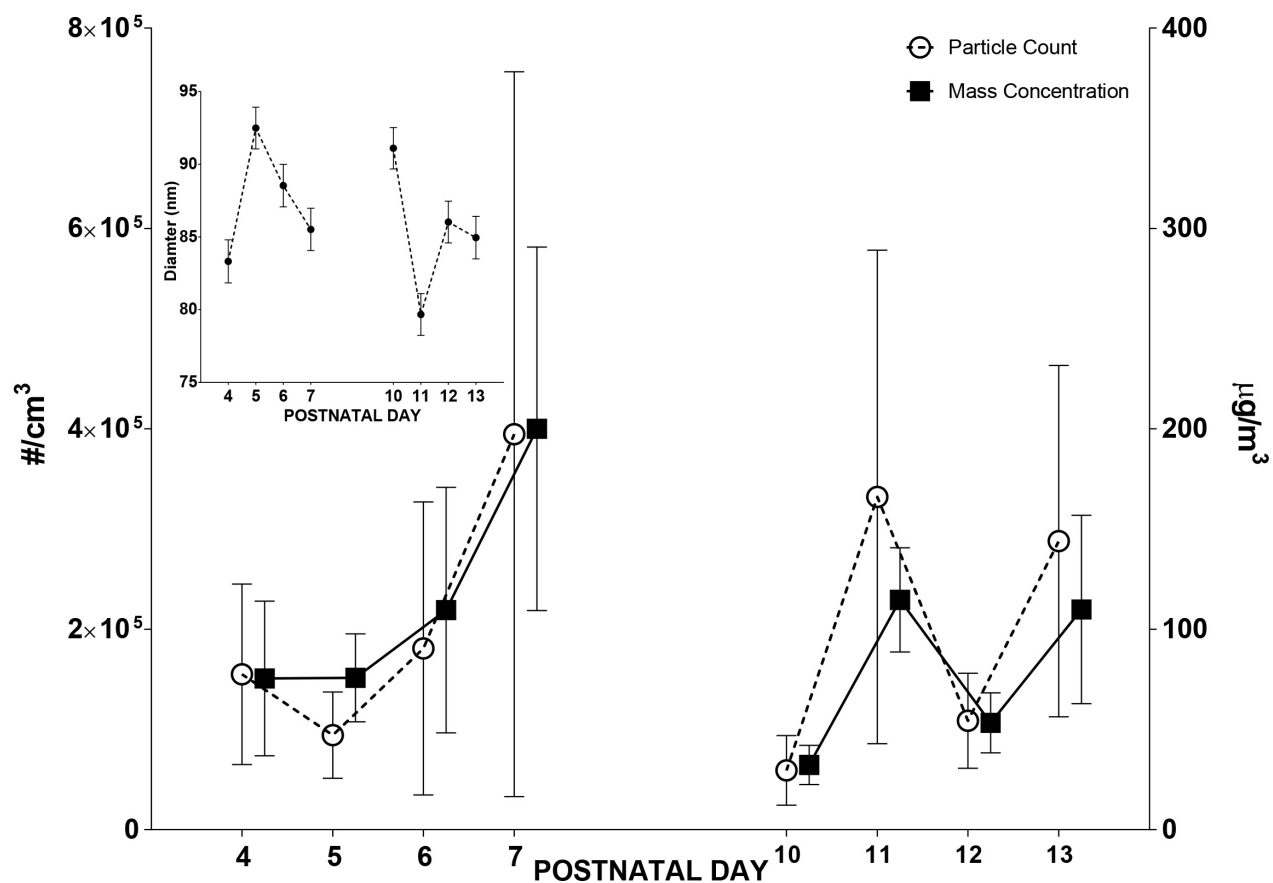


Figure 2.

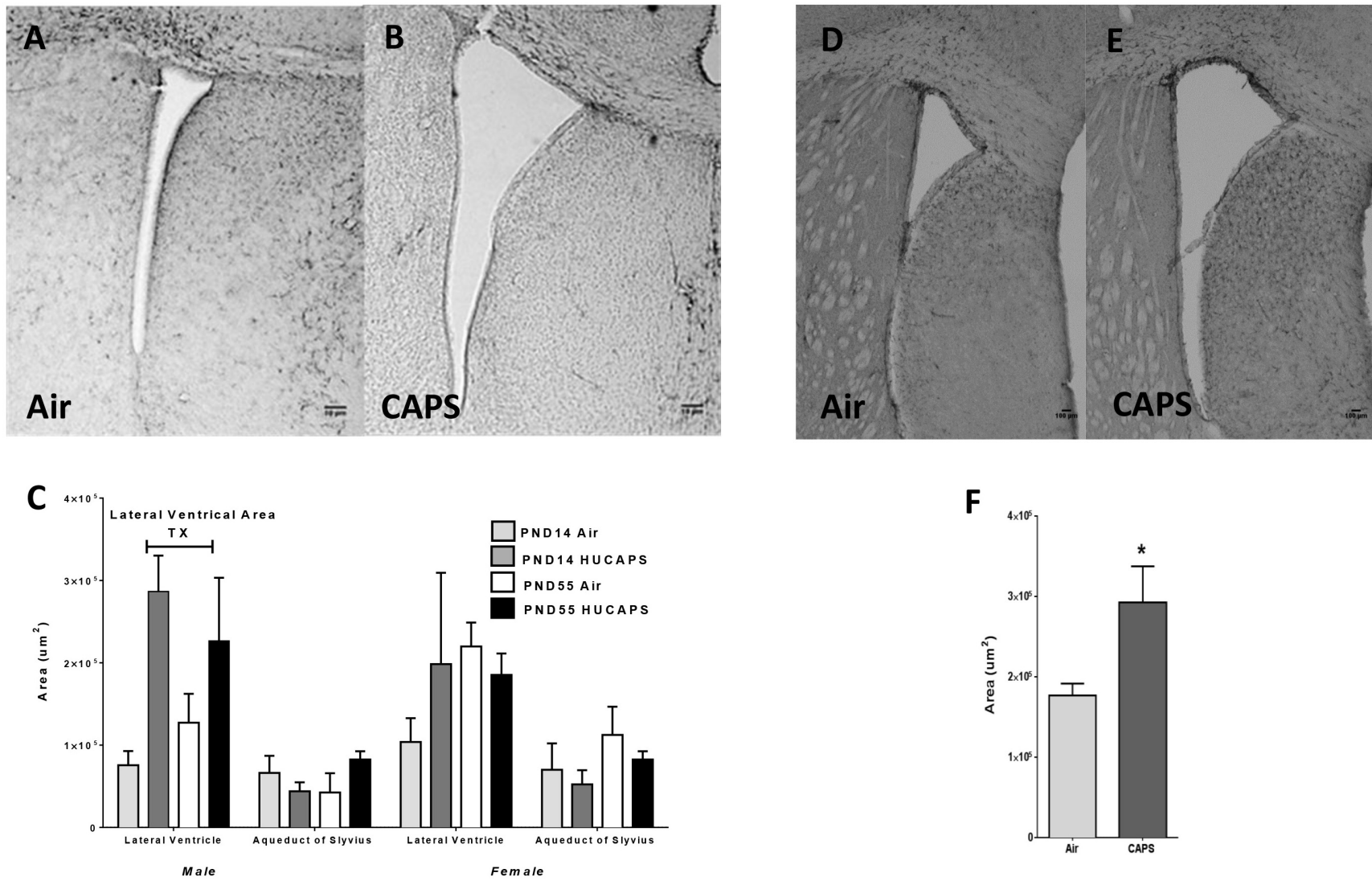
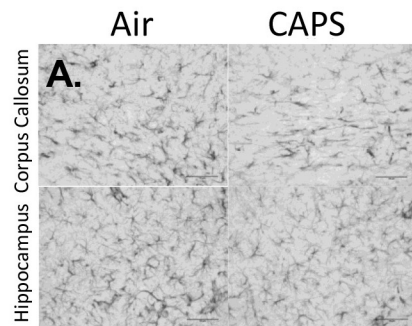
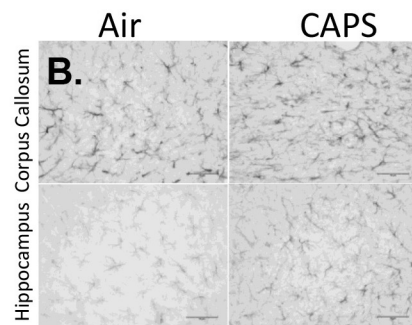


Figure 3.

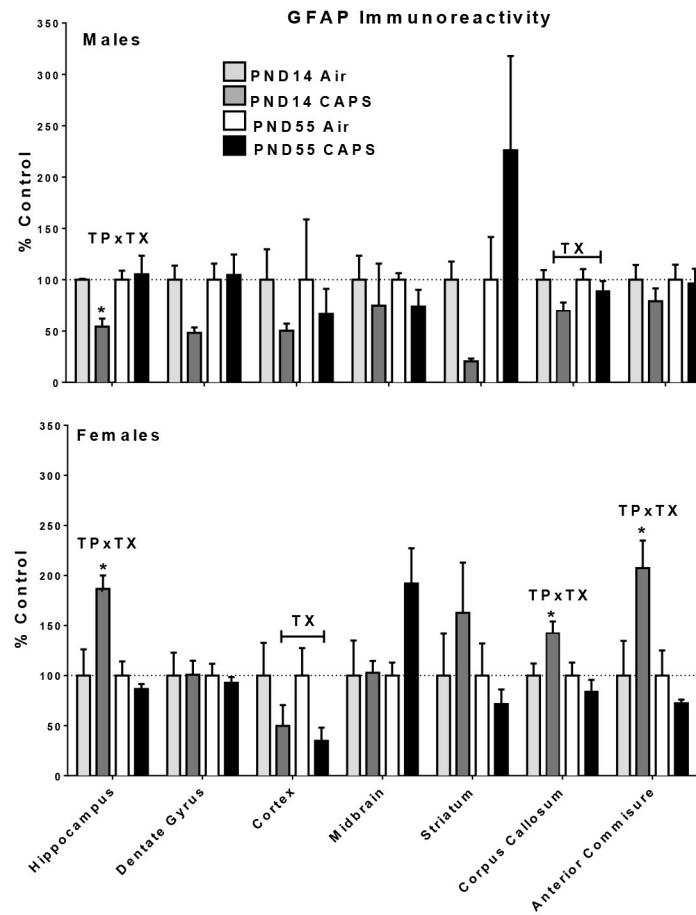
**Male**



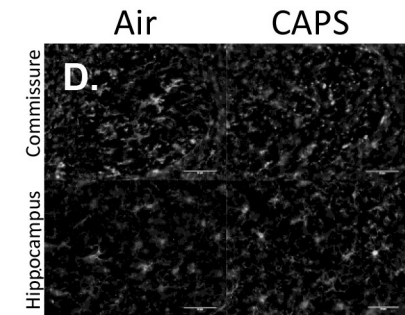
**Female**



**C.**



**Male**



**E.**

